

U.S. San Antonio Arsenal,
Servants' Quarters
San Antonio Arsenal
San Antonio
Bexar County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3175 C

HABS
TEX
15-SANT,
42C-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

UNITED STATES SAN ANTONIO ARSENAL,
SERVANTS' QUARTERS

HABS No. TX-3175-C

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15-SANT
426-

Location: San Antonio Arsenal, San Antonio,
Bexar County, Texas.

Present Owner: United States Government.

Present Occupant: General Services Administration.

Present Use: Storage of janitorial supplies.

Significance: This building is the oldest structure on the San Antonio Arsenal grounds having been erected sometime prior to 1857. It was originally the major outhouse to Dr. James M. Devine's residence which was incorporated into the Arsenal Depot as the Commanding Officers' Quarters.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Before 1857.
2. Original and subsequent owners: The building has been owned by the Federal Government since purchase, except for a period of Confederate occupancy.

B. Historical Context: The Servants' Quarters was part of a large property belonging originally to Dr. James M. Devine, former Treasurer and Mayor of San Antonio. The property consisted of a house, a stable and an assortment of outhouses. When the property was purchased in 1858 by the Federal Government for use as an arsenal site, all of the Devine buildings were converted to Government use. Today the Servants' Quarters is the lone survivor; the house and the other outbuildings have been demolished.

For further information, see United States San Antonio Arsenal Depot, HABS No. TX-3175.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure was incorporated into a complex which is an example of a pre-Civil War antebellum urban residence. It is said to be one of the very few surviving in San Antonio today.

2. Condition of fabric: The walls are sound, and the building is currently well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The building is rectangular, two stories high and measures 18'-16" X 40'-16".
2. Foundation: Probably coursed rubble limestone masonry laid in lime mortar.
3. Walls: Ashlar limestone laid in lime mortar, stuccoed.
4. Structural system, framing: Load bearing walls; typical wood joist floor and ceiling systems.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The only entrance is located on the west facade. It has a wood door with two molded panels, 40" wide, with a dressed stone threshold and a paneled jamb 15" deep. A square transom with fixed louvers is above this door.
 - b. Windows: Wood casements, in-swinging, with 10 lights per sash.
6. Roof: Very low-pitch, hipped, metal-covered roof. Simple wood cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plan: One large undivided room.
2. Flooring: Tongue-and-groove boards.
3. Walls: Plastered walls; beaded plank ceiling.
4. Doors: No interior doors.
5. Trim: Simple wood trim around openings and along base of wall.
6. Hardware: Pivot hinges on shutters.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: The building is oriented north and south with its front facade facing west. It is located to the rear of the Commanding Officers' Quarters and shares the south yard of that building.

Prepared by:

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Architecture Survey
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The San Antonio project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in the summer of 1968, and was made possible with funds from HABS and two sponsors, the Bexar County Historical Survey Committee and the San Antonio Conservation Society. Under the direction of James Massey, chief of HABS, the project was carried out by Wesley I. Shank (Iowa State University), project supervisor, and by student assistant architects, Charles W. Barrow (University of Texas); Les Beilinson (University of Miami); William H. Edwards (University of Illinois); and Larry D. Hermesen (Iowa State University) at the HABS field office in the former Ursuline Convent buildings, San Antonio. John C. Garner, Jr., director of Bexar County Architecture Survey, did the outside work on the written documentaries. Susan McCown, a HABS staff historian in the Washington, D.C. office, edited written data in 1983, for preparation of transmittal to the Library of Congress. Dewey G. Mears of Austin, Texas took the documentary photographs of the San Antonio structures.